

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O 281858Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4982

S E C R E T RABAT 1541

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KING HASSAN II)

SUBJ: KING HASSAN'S STATE VISIT; HIS MESSAGE FOR SECRETARY

REF: RABAT 1504; STATE 69705

1. SUMMARY: SUSPENSION SECRETARY'S MISSION AND  
SUBSEQUENT ASSASSINATION KING FEISAL HAVE CREATED  
CONFUSION AND GOM DESIRE FOR URGENT CONSULTATION WITH  
SECRETARY BEFORE TAKING FINAL DECISION ON KING'S VISIT.  
VIEWS ON US-MOROCCAN RELATIONS CONTINUE POSITIVE BUT  
KING NEEDS ASSURANCES HIS DESIRED ARAB ROLE AND  
CLOSENESS TO U.S. COMPATIBLE. KING HAS SENT AMBASSADOR  
BOUTALEB BACK TO WASHINGTON WITH CONFIDENTIAL PERSONAL  
MESSAGE FOR SECRETARY. URGE BOUTALEB'S REQUEST FOR  
EARLIEST POSSIBLE MEETING BE GIVEN HIGHEST PRIORITY,  
SO THAT KING CAN MAKE SPEEDY FINAL DECISION. END SUMMARY.

2. ON SATURDAY MARCH 22, EMBASSY TRANSMITTED WHITE  
HOUSE PROPOSAL TO ANNOUNCE KING HASSAN'S STATE VISIT  
(ON FOLLOWING WEDNESDAY). SAME EVENING ANNOUNCEMENT  
OCCURRED OF SECRETARY'S SUSPENSION OF DISENGAGEMENT  
TALKS. (KING AND IMMEDIATE ENTOURAGE HAD PREVIOUSLY  
BEEN SHOWING INCREASED CONCERN ABOUT THESE TALKS IN  
ALL OF MY RECENT CONTACTS.) IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER  
KING ORDERED BOUTALEB BACK TO RABAT FOR CONSULTATIONS.

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BOUTALEB ARRIVED JUST MINUTES BEFORE NEWS OF KING

FEISAL'S ASSASSINATION REACHED RABAT AND THREW PALACE INTO TOTAL CONFUSION. MATTERS PROBABLY MADE WORSE BY ABSENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER LARAKI IN CAIRO (ON WAY BACK FROM CHINA) AT ARAB LEAGUE MEETING.

3. AFTER CONSULTING WITH OTHER ARAB LEADERS, KING IS NOW SENDING AMBASSADOR BOUTALEB BACK TO WASHINGTON WITH STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND URGENT PERSONAL MESSAGE FOR SECRETARY. (KING IS SENDING HIM ON PERSONAL PLANE TO LISBON WHERE HE IS BOOKED ON TWA 901 TO NEW YORK, CONNECTING WITH NATIONAL 491, ETA D.C. 2133 SATURDAY NIGHT.) ALTHOUGH BOUTALEB COULD NOT WITHOUT "PREEMPTING HIS MISSION" AND VIOLATING KING'S COMMAND TELL ME EXACT CONTENTS OF MESSAGE, I WAS ABLE TO DRAW HIM OUT SUFFICIENTLY TO GET FOLLOWING PICTURE: KING IS GENUINELY UNCERTAIN AS TO BEST COURSE OF ACTION AND VERY MUCH NEEDS SECRETARY'S ADVICE AND COUNSEL. HE CONTINUES TO GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO U.S. LINKS (STRONGLY EMPHASIZED BY BOUTALEB). MORE-OVER, HE AND BOUTALEB ARE AWARE OF TIME PRESSURE ON WHITE HOUSE, BUT KING WISHES TO HAVE BENEFIT OF SECRETARY'S (AND ONLY SECRETARY'S) VIEWS AND ADVICE BEFORE TAKING FINAL DECISION ON TRIP. BOUTALEB FEELS SITUATION POSITIVE AND IS CONFIDENT WHOLE MATTER COULD BE SETTLED IN MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS MANNER SHORTLY AFTER HIS MEETING WITH SECRETARY. THIS, OF COURSE, CONDITIONED ON EARLIEST POSSIBLE MEETING WITH SECRETARY, HOPEFULLY MONDAY, MARCH 31.

4. COMMENT: THE NATURE OF SECRETARY'S RESPONSE WILL, OF COURSE, HAVE TO BE TAILORED TO PRECISE NUANCES BOUTALEB BRINGS HIM FROM KING, NUANCES TO WHICH I AM NOT PRIVY. FOLLOWING THOUGHTS OCCUR TO ME:

A. KING WANTS TO BE CERTAIN HE CAN COMBINE AMBITIOUS PLAN TO PLAY EXPANDING ROLE IN ARAB WORLD WITH HIS DESIRE TO MAINTAIN AND USE BROADENED RELATIONS WITH U.S. WHILE I MUST ADMIT TO SOME INITIAL QUESTION, DURING RECENT DAYS, WHETHER KING WAS TURNING OUT TO BE FAIR WEATHER FRIEND READY TO DITCH US WHEN GOING GOT ROUGH, I NOW FEEL REASSURED THAT KING DEFINITELY WANTS TO PURSUE CLOSER RELATIONS WITH U.S., BUT ALSO TO MAKE SURE THIS CONTINUES

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TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH HIS RELATIONS AND AMBITIONS REGARDING OTHER ARAB STATES.

B. IF IT REMAINS TRUE THAT OUR MIDDLE EAST STRATEGY WILL BE SERVED BY MAINTAINING CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH KING HASSAN, IT FOLLOWS THAT IT IS IN OUR INTEREST TO GIVE HIM--WITHOUT APPEARING TOO EAGER--WHATEVER ASSURANCES WE CAN AT THIS STAGE ALONG LINES HE WANTS AND NEEDS. AS I SEE IT FROM HERE, APPEARANCE OF KING ON AMERICAN SCENE

AS PROMINENT ARAB LEADER AND PROVEN FRIEND OF U.S., I.E. LINK BETWEEN U.S. AND ARABS, COULD MAKE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO PRESENT REASSESSMENT PROCESS AND IMAGE OF OUR POLICY. IN PROCESS, A LITTLE FLATTERY REGARDING IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO HIS PRESENT AND FUTURE ROLE WILL NOT BE TAKEN AMISS.

C. KING MIGHT, FOR EXAMPLE, WISH TO HEAR REASSURING WORDS ON U.S. INTENTIONS CONCERNING RESUMPTION OF GENEVA TALKS (ALTHOUGH KING HAS ALWAYS STRESSED TO ME THAT HE THOUGHT GENEVA CONFERENCE SHOULD BE REGARDED AS RATIFICATION OF PRIOR, MORE DISCREET NEGOTIATIONS). GOM VIEWS PRESUMABLY REFLECTED IN HEADLINE TREATMENT BY SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS MARCH 28 OF AFP ANALYSIS SECRETARY'S MARCH 26 PRESS CONFERENCE. STRESS WAS ON LACK OF U.S. OPPOSITION TO GENEVA CONFERENCE AND ON NEED FOR U.S.-SOVIET AGREEMENT BEFOREHAND ON DESIRED RESULTS IF CONFERENCE TO SUCCEED. ALTHOUGH IT IS EARLY TO MAKE JUDGMENT, FAVORABLE TREATMENT LIKE THIS IN GOM-GUIDED PRESS OF U.S. POSITION ON FUTURE PEACE EFFORTS COULD BE DESIGNED TO HELP CONTINUE FAVORABLE ATMOSPHERE VIS-A-VIS U.S.

D. IN VIEW OF FOREGOING, URGE SECRETARY GRANT BOUTALEB'S REQUEST FOR EARLIEST APPOINTMENT, HOPEFULLY MONDAY, MARCH 31.  
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